AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

1. (Currently Amended) A method of managing a first points issuer and a second points issuer, wherein first points are issued by ~~the~~ first points issuer and differ from ~~the~~ second points that are issued by the second points issuer, ~~said managing~~ the method ~~is~~ implemented by a computer ~~programmed to effect~~ and comprising the ~~following~~ steps of:

    (a)   a customer setting a first number of the first points to be sold;

    (b)   the first points issuer setting the point withdrawal rate of the first points and the second points issuer setting the deposit rate of the second points, each of said withdrawal rate and of said deposit rate being indicative of the monetary value of each of the first points and each of the second points respectively;

    (c)   determining, by a processor, a second number of the second points based upon the point withdrawal rate of the first points issuer, the deposit rate of the second points issuer and the first number of the first points; and

    (d)   exchanging, by the processor, the first number of the first points from the first point issuer to the second points issuer.

2. (Currently Amended) The method ~~of managing~~ as claimed in claim 1, wherein said step c) of determining the equivalent number of the second points comprises the sub-steps of:

    (i)   determining the monetary value of the first number of first points as the product of the first number of first points and the point withdrawal rate of the first points issuer; and

(ii)   determining the equivalent number of the second points as the quotient of the monetary value of the first number of first points divided by the point depositing rate of the second points issuer.

3. (Currently Amended) A system for managing first and second points issuers, first points ~~are~~ being issued by the first points issuer and differ from second points ~~that are~~ issued by the second points issuer, said managing system comprising:

(a)   a first terminal having a first terminal database for storing an account of the customer's first points;

(b)   a second terminal having a second terminal database for storing an account of the customer's second points; and

(c)   a transaction center having a center input and a central computer programmed to effect the following steps:

(i)   the customer setting via said center input a first number of first points to be sold;

(ii)   the first points issuer setting a point withdrawal rate of the first points and the second point issuer setting a point deposit rate of the second points, each of said withdrawal rate and said deposit rate being indicative of the monetary value of each of their first points and the monetary value of each of their second points respectively;

(iii)   determining an equivalent number of the second points based upon the point withdrawal rate of the first points issuer, the point deposit rate of the second points issuer and the first number of the first points; and

(iv)   providing respectively to said first and second points issuers a first transaction message to withdraw the first number of first points from said first terminal

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database and to deposit the equivalent number of second points in said second terminal database.

4. (Currently Amended) The ~~program managing~~ system as claimed in claim 3, wherein said transaction center further responds to the first transaction message to convert the first number of first points into an equivalent second number of second points and to deposit the second number of second points in said second terminal database of said second terminal.

5-12. (Cancelled)

13. (Currently Amended) A method of managing first and second points issuers, each of the first points issuer issuing first points and the second points issuer issuing second points at exchange rates set by the first and second points issuers respectively, the first points differing from the second points, ~~said points exchanging~~ the method ~~is~~ implemented by a computer ~~programmed to effect~~ and comprising the ~~following~~ steps of:

(a)   entering first and second exchange rates by the first and second points issuers respectively;

(b)   entering a customer's request for buying first points and selling second points;

(c)   determining, by a processor, the presence or absence of each of the first and second exchange rates; and

(d)   blocking, by the processor, the selling and/or buying of points in the absence of either of the first or second exchange rates.

14. (Currently Amended) A system for managing a loyalty points program at an exchange rate set by a proprietor of the points program, said system comprising:

(a) at least one terminal associated with the points program and <u>including</u> ~~comprising~~ a terminal input, a terminal database and a terminal server programmed at least in part to effect the following steps:

(i) respond to a customer request to withdraw from and/or deposit points into said one terminal,

(ii) a point program proprietor entering and storing in said terminal database exchange rates for the points of the loyalty points program; and

(iii) detect the absence of the exchange rates for the points program to transmit a blocking signal; and

(b) a transaction center coupled by a data transmission path to said one terminal and ~~comprising~~ <u>including</u> a center input and a center server programmed to effect the following steps:

(i) respond to a customer request on said center input for transmitting via the data transmission path to said one terminal the customer request whereby points are withdrawn and/or deposited into the loyalty points program associated with said one terminal; and

(ii) respond to the blocking signal to prevent the transmission of the customer request.

15-20. (Cancelled)

21. (Currently Amended) A method of managing a first points issuer and a second points issuer, wherein first points are issued by the first points issuer, and second points are issued by the second points issuer and differ from the first points, ~~said managing~~ <u>the</u> method ~~is~~

implemented at least in part by a computer ~~programmed to effect~~ and comprising the ~~following~~

steps of:

    a)   a customer setting a first number of the first points to be sold ;

    b)   the first points issuer setting its point withdrawal rate of the first points and the

second point issuer setting its deposit rate of the second points to reflect respectively the

monetary value of each of the first and second points in a common currency;

    c)   transmitting the common currency of determined monetary value to the second

points issuer;

    d)   determining, by a processor, the monetary value of the common currency

transmitted from the first points issuer to the second points issuer as a function of the point

withdrawal rate of the first points and the set first number of first points to be sold; and

    e)   determining, by the processor, the number of second points to be deposited with

the second points issuer as a function of the monetary value of the transmitted common currency

and the deposit rate of the second points issuer.

    22. (Currently Amended) The method ~~of managing~~ as claimed in claim 21, wherein the

first points issuer has a first database for storing an account of the customer's first points; and a

second points issuer has a second database for storing an account of the customer's second

points.

    23. (Currently Amended) The method ~~of managing~~ as claimed in claim 22, wherein said

method further comprises the step of depositing the determined number of second points in to the

second database.

    24. (Currently Amended) ~~The~~ A method of using a monetary currency to redeem first

points of a first loyalty point program and to purchase second points of a second loyalty

program, the first loyalty point program comprises a first issuer of the first loyalty points, the

second loyalty program comprises a second issuer of the second loyalty points, at least one of the

first loyalty points differing from the second loyalty points, the ~~monetary currency using~~ method

~~is~~ implemented at least in part by a computer ~~programmed to effect~~ <u>and comprising</u> the ~~following~~

steps of:

      a)   the first and second issuers respectively setting a first withdrawal rate for the first

loyalty point program and a second deposit rate for the second loyalty point program;

      b)   a member of the first loyalty program setting a first number of the first points to

be redeemed;

      c)   determining<u>, by a processor,</u> as a function of the first number of the first points

and the first withdrawal rate, the monetary value of the first number of the first points as a

determined amount of the monetary currency; and

      d)   determining<u>, by the processor,</u> a second number of the second points to be

purchased as a function of the determined amount of monetary currency and the second deposit

rate.

      25. (Currently Amended) The method ~~of managing~~ as claimed in claim 24, wherein each

of the first and second loyalty programs has a plurality of corresponding members and comprises

a database, each database with a plurality of corresponding files, each file for storing the loyalty

points that were accumulated by the corresponding member of its loyalty program.

      26. (Currently Amended) The method ~~of managing~~ as claimed in claim 25, wherein step

b) transmits currency to the file of the corresponding member of the second loyalty program.

      27. (Currently Amended) The method ~~of managing~~ as claimed in claim 26, wherein there

is further included a step of providing an interface to implement step c) of determining the value

of the number of the first points and step d) for determining the number of second points, the

interface operating independently the first and second point issuers.

    28. (Currently Amended) ~~The~~ <u>A</u> method of using a common monetary currency to

manage a plurality of loyalty point programs, each loyalty program ~~comprises~~ <u>comprising</u> a

loyalty points issuer, at least one of the plurality of loyalty points issuers issuing first points, at

least another of the plurality of loyalty points issuer issuing second points that differ from the

first points, the ~~monetary currency using~~ method ~~is~~ implemented at least in part by a computer

~~programmed to effect~~ <u>and comprising</u> the ~~following~~ steps of:

    a)   each of the plurality of points issuers setting a withdrawal rate and a deposit rate

for its loyalty program;

    b)   a member of a related loyalty program setting a first number of the its loyalty

points to be redeemed;

    ~~d)~~ <u>c)</u>   determining<u>, by a processor,</u> as a function of the set of number of loyalty points

and the deposit rate of the related loyalty program, the monetary value of the set number of

points as a determined amount of the monetary currency; and

    ~~e)~~ <u>d)</u>   determining<u>, by the processor,</u> a second number of points to be purchased as a

function of the determined amount of monetary currency and the deposit rate of the related

loyalty program.

    29. (Currently Amended) A method of managing at least first and second points issuers,

each of said first and second points issuers comprising a set of points, ~~said managing~~ <u>the</u> method

implemented by a computer ~~programmed to effect~~ <u>and comprising</u> the ~~following~~ steps of:

    (a)   the first points issuer independently setting a withdrawing rate which defines the

value of one point of the withdrawal rate in terms of a common currency;

(b)   the second points issuer independently setting a deposit rate which defines the value of one point of the deposit rate in term of the common currency;

(c)   the first points issuer setting a first number of its first points to be traded to the second points issuer;

d)   multiplying, by a processor, the first number of the first points times the withdrawal rate of the first points issuer to provide a value of the first number of the first points in the common currency;

(e)   multiplying, by the processor, the value of the first number of the first points in the common currency times the deposit rate of the second points issuer to provide the corresponding number of the second points to be traded; and

(f)   trading, by the processor, the first number of the first points for the corresponding second number of the second points of the second points issuer.

30. (Currently Amended) A The method of managing at least first and second points issuers as recited claimed in claim 29, wherein the first points issuer is facilitated to sell its points to the second points issuer at a price set by the first issuer, and the second points issuer is facilitated to buy the points of the first issuer at a price set by the second issuer.

31. (Currently Amended) A method of managing at least a points withdrawing loyalty program which comprises a plurality of withdrawing points and a points depositing loyalty program which comprises a plurality of deposit points, said managing the method implemented at least in part by a computer programmed to effect and comprising the following steps of:

a)   the points withdrawing loyalty program setting a number of its withdrawing points;

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b)   the points withdrawing loyalty program setting a points withdrawing rate, which defines the value of one of the withdrawing points in terms of its common currency;

c)   multiplying, by a processor, the first number of the withdrawing points times the point withdrawing rate to provide a value of the number of the withdrawing points in terms of the common currency;

d)   the depositing loyalty program setting from the deposit loyalty program a points deposit rate, which defines the value of one point of the deposit rate in terms of its common currency; and

e)   multiplying, by the processor, the value of the number of withdrawing points times the point deposit rate for the depositing loyalty program to output the number of points to be deposited in the points deposit loyalty program.

32. (Currently Amended) A The method ~~of managing at least a points withdrawing loyalty program and a points deposit loyalty program~~ as claimed in claim 31, comprising ~~said managing method implemented at least in part by a computer programmed to effect the following steps of~~: setting in connection with the points withdrawing loyalty program is lower than the book liability per point, the points withdrawing rate, and by selling a points deposit rate higher than the book liability per point rate, then the points withdrawing loyalty program and the points deposit loyalty program are both able to generate a profit on the transactions with both the points withdrawing loyalty program and the points deposit loyalty program.

33. (Currently Amended) A The method ~~of managing at least the points withdrawing the loyalty program and the points deposit loyalty program~~ as claimed in claim 31, wherein the method ~~of managing~~ is implemented by an interchange between the points withdrawing loyalty program and the points deposit loyalty program, said interchange being connected to the points

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withdrawing loyal program to provide the value of a number of the withdrawing points in terms of the common currency, whereby the points withholding loyalty program can extract a profit from the value of the number of the withdrawing points.

34. (Currently Amended) A The method of managing at least the points withdrawing loyalty program as claimed in Claim 31, wherein the withdrawing loyalty program determines the number of the points to be sold, setting a liability withdrawal rate, multiplying the liability withdrawing rate times the number of points to be removed from the books of the withdrawing loyalty program, and removing the amount of withdrawing liability in terms of the common currency from the withdrawing loyalty program.

35. (Currently Amended) A The method of managing at least the points depositing program as claimed in Claim 31, wherein the depositing loyalty program determines the number of the points to be purchased, setting a liability depositing rate, multiplying the liability depositing rate times the number of points to be added to the books of the depositing program, and removing the amount of the depositing liability in terms of the currency from the depositing program.

36. (Currently Amended) A The method of managing at least the first and second points issuers as claimed in Claim 31, wherein a transaction fee is calculated as a percentage of the value of the number of points selected by a customer in the common currency.

37. (Currently Amended) A The method of managing at least the first and second points issuers as claimed in Claim 31, wherein the first points issuer and second points issuer calculates a point exchange rate as the quotient of the number of the withdrawing points of the first points issuer divided by the number of the deposit points of the second point issuer.

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38. (Currently Amended) A method ~~for~~ of managing an exchange of points to and from a loyalty program, said loyalty program comprising a withdrawing issuing of points and a depositing issuing of points, the loyalty program including an administrator, ~~said managing~~ the method implemented in part by a computer programmed ~~to the effect~~ and comprising the ~~following~~ steps of:

a)   the loyalty program administrator sets a withdrawing rate which defines the value of a points withdrawing rate in terms of a common currency and a points depositing rate which defines the value of one point of the deposit rate in terms of the common currency;

b)   the loyalty program ~~administration~~ administrator sets a first number of its withdrawing points to be traded to another loyalty program;

c)   the loyalty program administrator setting the first number of the withdrawing issuing of points, and multiplying the first number of the first points times the withdrawing rate to provide a value of the first number of the first points in the common currency;

d)   receiving a second number of second points from another loyalty program ; and

e)   multiplying, by a processor, the value created by the second number of second points times the deposit rate of the second points issuer to provide the corresponding number of the second points to be traded.